

Appl. No. 09/441,142
Amdt. dated December 18, 2003
Reply to Office Action of November 17, 2003

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 96-105 are pending.

Applicants filed a reply on August 18, 2003, but the Examiner indicated that it was not fully responsive to the prior office action because the response did not address the patentable novelty of claim 89. The Examiner also indicated that the claim numbering may be off. Accordingly, applicants have canceled the previously pending claims and added new claims 96-105. It is respectfully submitted that these claims address the concerns of the Examiner.

Accordingly, for the reasons outlined in the reply filed August 18, 2003, it is respectfully submitted that claims 96-105 are allowable.

With regard to lines 9-11 of claim 101, it is respectfully submitted that while the inhibiting member is retractable, it is retractable relative the slot engagement member but is fixed relative to the housing. As noted in the reply filed August 18, 2003, the inhibiting member in Carl et al. is fixedly coupled to the housing of the locking device and is not retractable since the housing of the locking device is not capable of movement relative to the slot engagement member.

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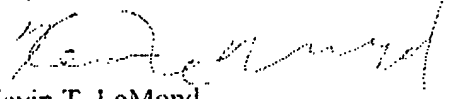
PATENT

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,


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